

## Message Text

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17

ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 AF-06 ARA-06 EUR-12 NEA-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-05 EB-07

AID-05 SAM-01 SAJ-01 /119 W  
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R 170855Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6089

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L 0408

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORC, PFOR, US, LA

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: THE POSITION OF THE PEOPLE'S  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF LAOS

REF: STATE 037591

1. THE FOLLOWING IS IN REPLY TO QUESTIONNAIRE CONTAINED IN  
PARA 7 OF REFTEL. SUBPARAGRAPHS BELOW ARE LETTERED TO  
CORRESPOND TO SUBPARAGRAPHS IN REFTEL:

(A) LAOS' MAJOR MULTILATERAL INTEREST IS IN OBTAINING THE  
MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM AS MANY COUNTRIES  
AS POSSIBLE AND FROM SUCH MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS AS UNITED  
NATIONS AGENCIES, THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND THE  
ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK. WE KNOW OF NO PARTICULAR ISSUES,  
MEMBERSHIPS OR INDIVIDUAL CANDIDACIES IT MIGHT PURSUE. IT IS  
DIFFICULT TO PREDICT  
HOW THE NEW COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES WILL PROCEED, BUT IN THE PAST  
LAOS HAS NOT BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN INTERNATIONAL FORA.

(B) LAOS IS DOMINATED BY VIET-NAM AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO TAKE  
WHATEVER POSTURE ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES THE VIETNAMESE  
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GOVERNMENT WISHES IT TO TAKE. HANOI, IN TURN, APPEARS AT THIS

TIME TO ADOPT MOSCOW'S POSITION ON MOST INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS. LAOS HAS NO INFLUENCE ON ANY OTHER COUNTRY, THOUGH IT CAN PROBABLY EXPECT COMMUNIST AND THIRD-WORLD SUPPORT FOR ITS INTERNATIONAL STATEMENTS.

(C) UNDER THE PREVIOUS REGIME LAOS DELEGATES WERE KEPT ON A LOOSE LEASH AND SELDOM INSTRUCTED. THEY EVIDENTLY REPORTED LITTLE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHICH WAS GENERALLY UNINFORMED. WE SUSPECT THAT THE NEW COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES WILL KEEP A CLOSER REIN ON THEIR REPRESENTATIVES. IN ANY CASE, A LAO DELEGATION IN NEED OF INSTRUCTIONS WOULD NO DOUBT FOLLOW THE VIETNAMESE LEAD, OR -- IF THE VIETNAMESE WERE NOT REPRESENTED IN A PARTICULAR FORUM -- VOTE WITH THE SOVIETS.

(D) NO.

(E) LAOS IS, OF COURSE, NO LONGER RECEPTIVE TO AMERICAN REPRESENTATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES; THE QUESTION OF THE PDRL'S ACCEPTING THE CONCEPT OF "INTERACTION" WITH THE USG ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES AS AN ELEMENT OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS HARDLY ARISES. THE ONLY SUCH ISSUE WE HAVE RAISED WITH THE LAO IN RECENT MONTHS WAS ANGOLA, OVER WHICH LAOS HESITATED FOR SOME WEEKS BEFORE IT FOLLOWED THE VIETNAMESE AND SOVIET LEAD BY RECOGNIZING THE MPLA. THE DELAY, WE ARE QUITE CERTAIN, RESULTED NOT FROM OUR SINGLE REPRESENTATION BUT RATHER FROM THE REMOTENESS FROM LAOS OF THE COUNTRY AT ISSUE AND THE DIVERGENCE BETWEEN THE VIETNAMESE/SOVIET POSITION ON THE ONE HAND AND THE CHINESE POSITION ON THE OTHER. LAOS IS NOT ABOVE SEEKING U.S. BACKING, BUT ONLY ON ISSUES OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST TO ITSELF, E.G., ASKING THE USG TO INFLUENCE THAILAND TO OPEN THE THAI-LAO BORDER. WITH U.S. ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TERMINATED AT THE LAO GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST (ALTHOUGH LAOS WOULD LIKE TO SEE U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE RENEWED, ON LAO TERMS), WE CANNOT ASSOCIATE THE LEVEL OF OUR ASSISTANCE WITH LAOS'S VOTING RECORD. THAT RECORD, OF COURSE, HAS BECOME SOLIDLY ANTI-U.S. SINCE THE COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER HERE.

2. POLITICAL OFFICER STEPHEN T. JOHNSON HAS BEEN DESIGNATED VIENTIANE'S MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS OFFICER.  
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## Message Attributes

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